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TRANSACTIONS.

SEVENTY-SECOND REGULAR MEETING, November 6, 1883.

Colonel GARRICK MALLERY, President, in the Chair.

The SECRETARY reported for the Curator the receipt of fifty-three gifts of publications since the last meeting in May.

On motion of Col. SEELY, the Society passed a vote of thanks to the gentlemen who had donated the publications above referred to.

The retiring President, Major J. W. POWELL, then read his address entitled "HUMAN EVOLUTION."*

SEVENTY-THIRD REGULAR MEETING, November 20, 1883.

Colonel GARRICK MALLERY, President, in the Chair.

The election of Dr. Charles Warren, of the Bureau of Education, and Mr. S. H. Kauffman, as active members, was announced.

In the absence of Mr. L. A. Kengla, his paper, entitled "STONE MOUNDS AND GRAVES IN HAMPSHIRE COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA,"† was read by Prof. O. T. MASON.

ABSTRACT.

The mounds or graves described in this paper are found on the eastern side of the South Branch Mountain, Hampshire Co., W. Va., about one mile and a half from the mouth of the South Branch, on the property of Charles French. This entire region was once held by the Massawomec Indians, and the locality under consideration was the hunting ground of the Tamenents.

* Published in Vol. II, Transactions Anthropological Society, Washington, pp. 176-208.

† Published in the Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution for 1883, pp. 868-872.

The graves or mounds were of a very peculiar construction reminding one of the stone graves of Tennessee and yet possessing some specific characteristics. The most noticeable feature is the presence of a rude stone cist completely covered with a huge pile of loose stones. In some cases these piles were of great extent.

DISCUSSION.

Major POWELL said that as many were not personally familiar with the stone graves and mounds of the upper Mississippi and its many great tributaries, he would remark that these forms of receptacles for the dead consisted of stones placed edgewise so as to form an oblong space, the stones presenting an almost continuous shoulder, upon which was placed a stone slab as a cover.

The discovery of articles of modern manufacture was not of rare occurrence, and the recent investigation by Mr. Carr, of the Peabody Museum at Cambridge, and the researches of the Bureau of Ethnology combined to show that the "Mound-Builders" could not be classed as a people distinct from the historic Indians occupying those localities where such remains are still found.

Prof. MASON stated that the paper just read was useful for the reason that the subject pertained to a region comparatively near to our city, which had not yet been investigated. Several years ago, a party consisting of Dr. Rau, Mr. Reynolds, and other gentlemen visited the Luray Cave for the purpose of investigation, and Mr. Reynolds subsequently opened some stone graves near that locality. These were really cairns.

Major POWELL said that in Kentucky and elsewhere stone graves are found by the hundred. He had opened great numbers of graves in the same mound, showing that people had buried bodies in diverse ways and at different times, the manner being that stone grave was added to stone grave until scores were erected.

Prof. MASON inquired whether single stone graves had been discovered over which large heaps of stones had been erected, to which Major POWELL replied that he had not, to his recollection, found single graves so covered, but where there were several together, many of the western tribes are said to cast stones upon the graves of their dead; but more definite information as to their actual practice was desirable.

Prof. GORE said that during a recent visit to southwestern Vir-

ginia he learned of quite a number of mounds, none of which had yet been opened, and suggesting that this would present a good field for future investigators. The large number of stones referred to in the paper seemed a curious coincidence with a discovery made in New Mexico, consisting of a large stone erected near one of the pueblos about which lie several wagon loads of stones, thrown there, it is said, by passers by for "good luck."

Dr. REYNOLDS presented some facts referring to his examinations in various portions of the Potomac valley, and concluded by saying that at the site of an "ancient" burial ground at Front Royal, which had been partly washed down by high water at various times, he had found, among other things, medals, &c., of perhaps colonial times.

Major POWELL said that while in Minnesota last summer he inquired of a Sioux Indian their reason why they buried upon scaffolds, and was informed that in ancient times the Sioux lived among the lakes of Minnesota, and buried their dead in mounds; that when they left that country they expected some time to return, and so buried their dead on scaffolds, that they might gather the bones and bring them back and bury them in the grave mounds of their ancestors.

Prof. MASON stated in conclusion that many stone graves have been found in localities which do not abound in stones, plainly indicating that a strong motive caused them to be brought from great distances. Probably the people had originally lived in a stony country, and in new fields had clung to old usages.

Rev. J. OWEN DORSEY then read a paper entitled "AN OSAGE SECRET SOCIETY," which was further illustrated by a chart, enlarged from an original pictographic representation obtained from an Osage Indian.

ABSTRACT.

The writer has found traces of secret societies among the Omahas and cognate tribes of the Siouan family. Such a society is still in existence among the Osages. It must not be confounded with the secret societies of the Indian doctors. Each gens in the Osage tribe has a place in the order, the latter being the depository of the

mythical accounts of the origin of the gentes. It takes four days to relate the tradition of any gens, making eighty-four days needed to hear all the traditions. The order consists of seven degrees: 1. Songs of the Giving of Life. 2. Songs of the Bird (dove). 3. Songs of the Sacred Thing (bag). 4. Songs of the Pack-strap. 5. Songs of the Round Rush. 6. Songs of Fasting. 7. Songs of the Return from the Fight. Women are admitted to the order; but none of the younger people are initiated. Extracts were made from the two versions of the tradition of the Tsi-shu wa-shta-ke or peace-making gens of the left side of the tribe. This tradition is entitled "What is told of the old time (U-nu^N U-dha-ke)."

DISCUSSION.

Major POWELL thought it probable that this society might be for the preparation of medicine, or for some mystic rite other than the perpetuation of mythic history.

Mr. DORSEY replied that there are other societies than the above mentioned, entirely distinct, and solely for the preparation of medicine, as he had been able to ascertain. From this society emanate the directions to heads of war parties, plans for erecting lodges, hanging the kettles, and laying the pieces of fire-wood; also to the makers of the war drum, the stand, moccasins, and war bows, certain individuals being selected for each of these duties. Women belong to this society, and these have two small circles tattooed upon the forehead, one above the other. The crease or parting of the hair is painted to represent the path of the sun. In prayer they face the east at sunrise, and the west at sunset. The doors of the lodges are placed at the eastern side, and the dead are buried with their heads toward the east; hence no one will ever sleep with his head pointing in that direction.

Major POWELL then stated that he had, during last winter, investigated the organization of medicine societies among the Muskoki. According to this tribe diseases are caused by mythical animals, such as the bear, elk, deer, owl, spider, &c., and for each disease there is a distinct medicine society, the head personage of which initiates each year young men to cure the various forms of disease belonging to his class. The traditions of the mythical origin of each disease is preserved by the different chiefs of the medicine societies.

The neophyte is instructed through four different nights, through

four different moons, and through four years to instruct him in the mythologic cause of disease.

There are certain medicines employed for the various complaints, composed in part of root decoctions. They are prepared by taking one root running from the trunk directly to the north, one to the east, one to the south, and one to the west. The preparation of the medicine require ceremonies which last during four nights each, of four moons, and of four years each.

Mr. DORSEY stated that part of the Osage ceremonies were strictly secret, though the latter portion was public.

Prof. MASON inquired whether these ceremonies had in any way been influenced by contact with the whites, or whether they were a crystallized custom.

Mr. DORSEY replied that he had found recurrences of these customs in other cognate tribes, and believed that this special ceremony was original.

Prof. MASON desired to know of Mr. Dorsey whether it was not unusual to admit him to the secret meetings, to which the latter replied that it was only after the Indians had discovered that he was familiar with the ceremonies, learned of the northern tribes, that they imparted to him the fact. The speaker further stated that the recitations are also in an archaic form of the language.

In general, all the points obtained from the Osages tally with the information obtained from other cognate tribes.

Major POWELL said that people on reservations may be classed in two divisions, those who are yet pagan and those who profess the Christian religion, but the latter take part in ancient religious rites.

The people of Jemez, although Catholics, still visit the mountains once a month to perform their mystic rites. Some of the Iroquois also adhere to their ancient mystic ceremonies and practise them at stated times.

The importance of a knowledge of Indian languages is illustrated by Mr. Dorsey's paper for the collection of myths and facts pertaining to secret ceremonies, as is also the knowledge of similar customs among other tribes so as to know the method of approach and extraction.

Mr. DORSEY replied that he usually gained the confidence of his hearers by first telling them the myths of other tribes.